

HOUSING FUTURES



Volume 4 Issue 3— August 2014

First Street — Growth Futures

The First Street Development — a SouthEast proposal to the Department of Human Services to replace one uninhabitable property with three units.



<https://twitter.com/SouthEastOOP>

Followers: **380** Tweets: **210** (28 July 2014)



MANAGEMENT MATTERS



FIRST STREET GROWTH

Ian McLaren
General Manager

The First Street Development proposal in Clayton is an exciting opportunity for SouthEast Housing Co-operative Ltd.

It is a property owned by DHS and managed by SouthEast. Over time, however, the property has become uninhabitable and renovation

would be so prohibitive, it would be more cost effective to rebuild.

But, then, the property is large, and why rebuild one dwelling when it would be possible to build three dwellings and, therefore, increasing affordable housing opportunities.

Your board is keen to provide more affordable housing opportunities and, therefore, that is what we have done.

With the approval of the Department of Human Services, we now have Planning Permission, Design Specifications determined and Funding provided to erect three dwellings.

SouthEast will go to tender as soon as the Department of Human Services gives us the go-ahead. From the time of the go-ahead the three dwellings will be available in about six months. The development will be managed on our behalf by Common Equity Housing Ltd for a development fee cheaper than is otherwise available from other developers. CEHL will manage the development because it has the required qualified, experienced and skilled staff.

First Street has been vacant since November 2011.

A Precedent

This is a precedent setting proposal and similar proposals have now been developed by Common Equity Housing, the Northcote Rental Housing Co-operative and United Housing Co-operative.

There are currently no Victorian Government or Federal Government funds for community housing and the redevelopment of existing community housing is an opportunity to add to the affordable housing stock.

NEW DIRECTORS

Steven Grange

Steven Grange joined the board this year as an Independent Director. He is Business Development Manager at the First Option Credit Union—a \$160,000,000 credit union with 10,000 members.



For 35 years Steven has been working with industry-based credit unions. He was a director of the Kyneton Community Credit Co-operative between 1983-1987. He was Director and Chairman of the Reservoir Fawcner Credit Union from 1990-1997.

Steven says: “ I have an abiding interest in empowering people through co-operative endeavours. I believe strongly in the concept of People helping People.”

UK Housing Co-operatives

During August General Manager Ian McLaren will take some time off to visit housing co-operatives in the United Kingdom. Ian is visiting relatives and has agreed to include a week of visits to housing co-operatives. It's not a random visit as the Chief Executive Officer and Principal of the UK Co-operative College, Mervyn Wilson, has arranged a program of visits—to keep Ian busy.

Ian's visits to housing co-operatives will include examining their strengths and weaknesses, comparing the sector with Australia's housing co-operatives, housing co-operatives in the UK as part of the community housing, member engagement practices and results and the impact of the under-occupancy (bedroom) tax.

While Ian is visiting housing co-operatives in the UK, there will be brief reports published on the web site: <http://www.sehc.org.au> When Ian returns at the end of August he will prepare a report on his visit. He will also give an address at the AGM on 17 November 2014 on housing co-operatives in the UK.

Co-op Principles

Voluntary and open membership.

Democratic member control.

Member economic participation.

Autonomy and independence.

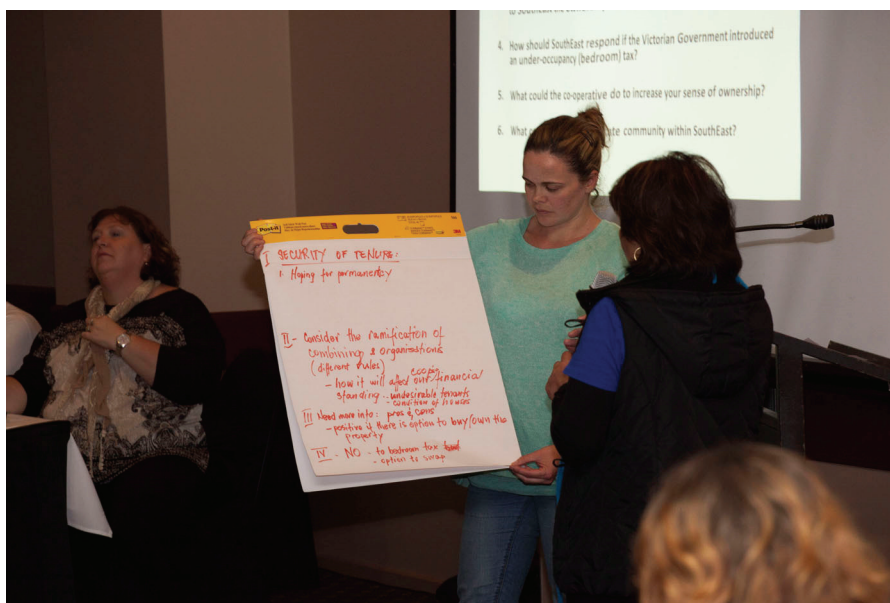
Autonomy and independence.

Education, training and information.

Co-operation among co-operatives.

Concern for community.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



A General Meeting of South-East Housing Co-operative Ltd in the evening of 26 May 2014 at the Dandenong Club was attended by 38 members with 26 members apologising for not being able to attend. The

meeting received a [Mid Year Report](#) presented by the General Manager Ian McLaren. The Mid Year Report has been introduced by the board this year as a new measure of accountability and transparency to members. This was followed by a report on the Victorian Government's New Directions for Social Housing and the Community Housing Federation of Victoria's report on Making Social Housing Work presented by Deputy Chairperson and Secretary Andrea Lee. Following the reports there were discussion groups on the theme of Security of Tenure.

Discussion Questions

Each discussion group was asked to respond to all or any of six questions:

1. What is security of tenure and housing in SouthEast?
2. How should SouthEast respond to the Victorian Government's proposal to transfer 12,000 public housing properties to community housing?
3. Should SouthEast propose to the Victorian Government that it transfer to SouthEast the ownership of the 150 properties managed for DHS?
4. How should SouthEast respond if the Victorian Government introduced an under-occupancy (bedroom) tax?
5. What could the co-operative do to increase your sense of ownership?
6. What could be done to facilitate community within SouthEast?

DISCUSSION GROUP 1

What is security of tenure and housing in SouthEast?

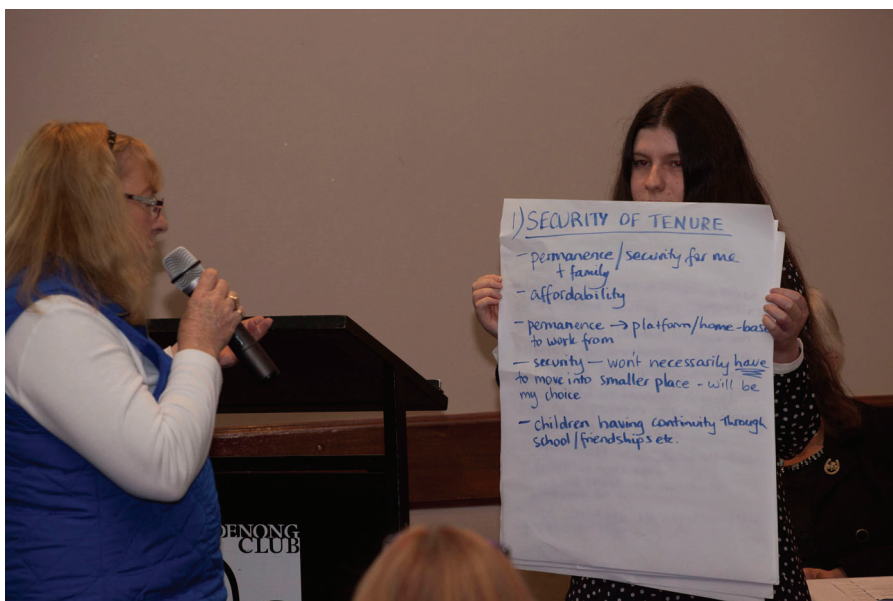
Gives the stability to raise families with assurance you have a home and can plan your future because you have stable tenancy,

Discrimination is reduced as everyone is accepted; the needs of tenants are listened to.

Ensures upkeep and maintenance of housing.

How should South-East respond to the Victorian Government's proposal to transfer 12,000 public housing properties to community housing?

It is a good idea. However, would we inherit the issues of the properties, tenants, be provided enough support to maintain and fix maintenance issues?



Are there other ways we can maintain co-op values and security of tenure with the new properties?

Should SouthEast propose to the Victorian Government that it transfer to South-East the ownership of the 150 properties managed for DHS?

Yes. We would prefer.

How should SouthEast respond if the Victorian Government introduced an under-occupancy (bedroom) tax?

It is not in the best interest for the \$20 tax however downsizing is a great idea.

What could the co-operative do to increase your sense of ownership?

Allow moderations to housing.

More group work.

What could be done to facilitate community within SouthEast?

No response.

DISCUSSION GROUP 2



What is security of tenure and housing in SouthEast?

Hoping for permanency.

How should SouthEast respond to the Victorian Government's proposal to transfer 12,000 public housing properties to community housing?

Consider the ramifications of combining and organisations (different rules) – how it will affect our co-ops financial standing – undesirable tenants – condition of houses

Should SouthEast propose to the Victorian Government that it transfer to SouthEast the ownership of the 150 properties managed for DHS?

Need more information: pros and cons – positive if there is the option to buy/own property.

How should SouthEast respond if the Victorian Government introduced an under-occupancy (bedroom) tax?

NO – to bedroom tax.

Option to swap.

What could the co-operative do to increase your sense of ownership?

Longer leases 5 years +

Or – no time frame on leases.

Option for our children to take over the property.

What could be done to facilitate community within SouthEast?

Bring back working bees.

Bartering/swop

Board Meetings 2014—29 August, 26 September, 31 October, 28 November 12 December.

DISCUSSION GROUP 3



Discussion Group 3

What is security of tenure and housing in SouthEast?

Not having to move i.e., children's school etc.

No worry of becoming homeless.

A residence place/home for life/long-term.

Rent capped when on Concession compared to private rental.

Maintenance – confidence that if anything breaks down it will get fixed.

How should SouthEast respond to the Victorian Government's proposal to transfer 12,000 public housing properties to community housing?

Only if financially feasible.

Should SouthEast propose to the Victorian Government that it transfer to SouthEast the ownership of the 150 properties managed for DHS?

Only if financially feasible.

How should SouthEast respond if the Victorian Government introduced an under-occupancy (bedroom) tax?

Fight bedroom tax.

What could the co-operative do to increase your sense of ownership?

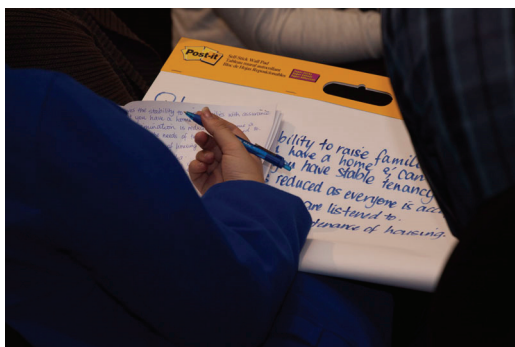
To make sure maintenance on properties is up to date.

What could be done to facilitate community within SouthEast?

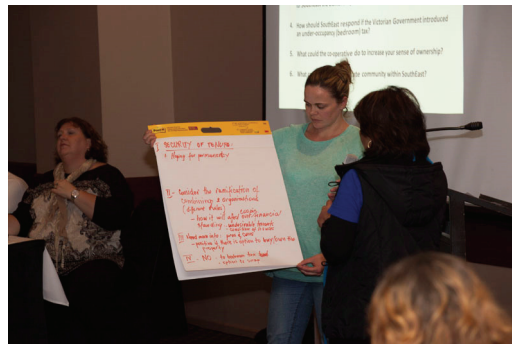
Ensure all external properties are kept in good clean condition and enforce three strike rule. Working bees in local areas. Rowdy member to be given three strike rule.

AGM 17 November 2014

DISCUSSION GROUP 4



What is security of tenure and housing



in

SouthEast?

Security of tenure Permanency/security for me and family. Affordability Permanence – platform/home-base to work from. Security – won't necessarily have to move into smaller place – will be my choice. Children having continuity through school/friendships etc.

How should SouthEast respond to the Victorian Government's proposal to transfer 12,000 public housing properties to community housing?

What impact on overall number of low-income housing opportunities? What would be the impact on personal input/involvement of co-op members if size greatly increases?

How would we manage a much larger number of properties without co-op becoming remote from membership? Costs – would administering all these properties – rents up? Where would rent assistance fit in? What condition ("life expectancy") of properties on offer?

Should SouthEast propose to the Victorian Government that it transfer to SouthEast the ownership of the 150 properties managed for DHS?

We'd have a lot of questions that we'd need answered – what are the pros and cons? What are the financial issues? - Rates? Age of properties? Structural maintenance? Co-op has already shown it's very good at managing these properties at the moment. What's the catch? Why would govt offer this?

How should SouthEast respond if the Victorian Government introduced an under-occupancy (bedroom) tax?

Add to rental housing costs – people are in co-op housing because they're on low incomes. Does co-op have appropriate alternatives available to offer to 'downsize' in same communities? Some differing opinions in the group on this issue. Would like to see the impact this has in England when implemented.

What could the co-operative do to increase your sense of ownership?

Maintain security of tenure. This does give us a sense of opportunity.

What could be done to facilitate community within SouthEast?

Facebook Group? Try offering more social opportunities like the XMAS party.

DISCUSSION GROUP 5



Discussion Group 5

What is security of tenure and housing in SouthEast?

Security of tenure

Sense of security is belonging.

A safe environment for our kids.

Secure in knowledge of maintenance.

Happy in ourselves being able to give our kids security – not having to fear for the well-being or safety of family in dodgy rentals.

How should SouthEast respond to the Victorian Government's proposal to transfer 12,000 public housing properties to community housing?

Co-op should respond positively.

A decent budget per house would be 1st of many considerations.

Promote responsible ownership/tenancies.

Should SouthEast propose to the Victorian Government that it transfer to SouthEast the ownership of the 150 properties managed for DHS?

Transfer of titles – growing opportunities.

How should SouthEast respond if the Victorian Government introduced an under-occupancy (bedroom) tax?

With reservations.

Exemptions for extenuating circumstances e.g. no smaller properties available or medical reasons.

What could the co-operative do to increase your sense of ownership?

Hand us personal title – tongue in cheek.

What could be done to facilitate community within SouthEast?

Enough done already.

A NATSEM CALL



Working-age Australians at the lowest income levels will suffer the most pain from the budget, despite the government's rhetoric about everyone making a contribution, according to analysis by the NATSEM public policy experts.

The researchers said they sought to replicate the type of analysis included in successive federal budgets since 2004, but such estimates were omitted in this year's budget.

Issues have been examined for some assumptions and uncontested conclusions were analysed by [economic modelling by the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling \(Natsem\)](#) and [separate modelling by the Australian National University](#) showed low-income earners were hit hardest and high-income earners would feel very little pain.

A single, unemployed 23-year-old faces an 18% cut in disposable income in 2016-17 as a result of the budget, the largest proportional reduction of the 13 household types analysed by the Crawford school of public policy at the Australian National University.

Professor [Peter Whiteford](#) and PhD candidate Daniel Nethery found the second-biggest impact would be borne by a single parent on Newstart with one child aged eight, with a reduction of more than 12% in disposable income.

NATSEM Budget Analysis 2014-2015

<http://www.natsem.canberra.edu.au/storage/2014-15%20Budget%20Research%20Note.pdf>



A CO-OPERATIVE CALL

“A committee with the best co-operative will in the world are powerless if the rank and file of the society, for instance, seek only the cheapest goods at the store, and purchase at a rival retail shop every article market a farthing cheaper than the store price..... A society of convinced co-operators will buy all they need at their own store and scorn the temptations of the non-co-operative trader.....” Joseph Clayton **Co-operation** T.C...& E.C. Jack, 1912 p.35

What, then, are the obligations of a member of the SouthEast Housing Co-operative Ltd?

There are two broad obligations—remain a tenant of good standing consistent with the Residential Tenancies Act and participate in General Meetings.

All members are expected to attend General Meetings—unless they have sought and obtained the right to not attend General Meetings. If you are unable to attend a General Meeting for whatever reason, then, you must contact the SouthEast Office and provide an apology for your not being able to attend and provide a reason for your absence. If your apology is accepted by the General Meeting, then, you are deemed to have met the participation requirement.

For the General Meeting on 26 May 2014 there were 38 (23.90%) members in attendance and 26 (16.35%) apologies—a total of 64 (40.25%) who met the participation requirements.

If we add the retired members, then, we have a total of 85 (53.46%) of 159 members.

That leaves us with 79 (46.54%) who are not retired and who did not meet the participation requirement by either attending the General Meeting or providing an apology with a reason.

What should we do about this? It is your co-operative and it is your choice.

Coming out—of retirement

Some members have sought and obtained participation retirement from the co-operative i.e. they are no longer required to attend General Meetings—21 (13.21%) of the members are retired. The board would like to encourage retired members to consider coming out of retirement if possible as the experience of retired members is invaluable to the co-operative.

The board misses your experience and knowledge—and involvement.


Shirley Faram (Chairperson)

INSPECTIONS



Jim Kokoras, Property Officer

Feedback Options

 03 9706 8005

Email: jim@sehc.org.au

Facsimile:  03 9706 8558

Online:

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/maintenance-form>

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/maintenance-form>

Maintenance at [sehc.org.au](http://www.sehc.org.au)

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/maintenance>

The property reviews inspections carried out by Hi-Tech on behalf of the Department of Human Services were completed in May 2014. Last year DHS asked housing providers not to undertake any inspections because of Hi-Tech.

In accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act, a six month period is required prior to carrying out another inspection i.e. by SouthEast.

The annual SouthEast inspections were suspended, therefore, until DHS completed the property reviews.

It is now anticipated that annual inspections by SouthEast will be after November 2014.

A letter will be sent out with a minimum of 7 days notice advising all members of the times and dates of inspections.

Remember also—maintenance requests can be emailed to me at jim@sehc.org.au in point form. It does not have to be on the maintenance request form.

SouthEast Video Stats



The films were uploaded to YouTube on 27—29 February 2012. Numbers in brackets—times viewed as at 28 July 2014.

Total You Tube views—3625

The Trailer (1073)

<http://youtu.be/z1Y813L-xR4> 2m

The Other Way Home (1561)

<http://youtu.be/9R4ZCACLgJE> 12m 41s

Advertorial—Co-operation Works (991)

<http://youtu.be/x59NDnT3apo> 30s

Privacy: SouthEast is committed to protecting your privacy and complying with all applicable privacy laws. If you have any questions or comments about our privacy practices, we can be contacted at PO Box 7141, Dandenong Phone: 3175. 03 9706 8005. Fax 03 9706 8558

EXCUSES

Here are some typical comments from members who in the past have not returned their income statements on time:

"I'm hopeless."

"It's Centrelink's fault."

"I've been sick."

"I haven't had time."

"I forgot about it."

"I haven't got around to it."

"I thought I posted it."

"I filled it out but lost it."

"I didn't know."

"No idea."

"The kid must have taken it."

"It's here somewhere."

"I'm just going to post it now."

"I mailed it yesterday."



Joy Haines, Tenancy Officer

Feedback Options

Telephone: 📞 03 9706 8005

Email: joy@sehc.org.au

Facsimile: 📠 03 9706 8558

Online:

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/tenancy-form>

Tenancy at [sehc.org.au](http://www.sehc.org.au)

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/tenancy>

Web Site Stats

Google Analytics is used to log website statistics on <http://www.sehc.org.au> Statistics were first collected on 3 June 2012.

Between 3 June 2012 - 29 June 2014 there were **4908** visitors making **6612** visits to 22,714 pages. Of the total visits, 5222 were from Australia - 3846 Melbourne, 568 Sydney, 223 Brisbane, 116 Adelaide and 101 Canberra.

Top page views were :

Contact 1812, Tenancy 1119, About Us 553, Procedural Motions 464, Staff 311, Members 256, Meetings 251, Beyond 212 193, Mission 187, Housing Registrar 172 and History 167

Board Works



SouthEast directors and staff at work from left clockwise: Tracey Hall, Gayle Koubwere, Jan Dickson, David Griffiths (Governance Officer), Shirley Faram, Ian McLaren (General Manager), Greg Nolan, Steven Grange and Andrea Lee.

The SouthEast board meeting on the 25 July 2014 was busy, productive and energetic with the directors examining and approving:

New Rules for consideration at the Annual General Meeting on 17 November 2014.

An updated Member Manual also to be considered at the Annual General Meeting on 17 November 2014.

The Annual Report for 2014-2015.

A submission to the Federal Government's report A New System for Better Employment and Social Outcomes (June 2014) - the interim Report of the reference Group on Welfare Reform to the Minister for Social Services.

A submission to the Greater Dandenong Council on its Draft Dandenong Housing Strategy.

Poverty Line Australia

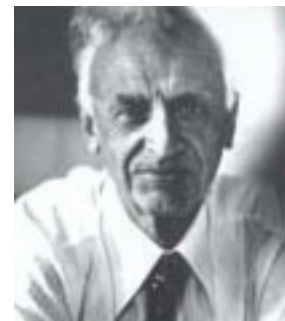
Poverty Lines: Australia is published by Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, The University of Melbourne Online ISSN: 1448-0530

Frequency: Quarterly Current Issue: December 2013

Poverty Lines: Australia is a quarterly newsletter that updates the Henderson Poverty Line as defined in the 1973 Commonwealth Commission of Inquiry into Poverty. It is standard reference material for those concerned with social welfare policy in Australia. Minimum income levels required to avoid a situation of poverty are presented for a range of family sizes and circumstances. The updated poverty lines take into account changes in the average income level of all Australians, reflecting the idea that poverty is relative. Each issue includes a table indicating changes in the purchasing power of the poverty lines and a table comparing welfare payment levels with poverty lines for various family types.

How does the poverty line compare with maximum welfare payments? Here are two examples:

	Total Income	Poverty Line
Couple with two children	\$722.84	\$946.11
Single with two children	645.84	\$687.44



Professor Ronald Henderson

The Henderson Poverty inquiry established Australia's first poverty line in the December quarter 1973. In 1973 it was \$62.60 For the December quarter 2013 it is \$946.11 per week for a family of two adults, one working, and two children. The Commission of Inquiry into Poverty was set up in August 1972 by the Liberal Prime Minister William McMahon, and Henderson was appointed as Chairman of the inquiry. The Commission's first main report, "Poverty in Australia" was released in April 1975

A new book about co-operation between co-operatives—about the recent experience of Co-operatives Victoria written by its Secretary David Griffiths. It is about achievements, failures and struggles. It's a unique insight into the co-operative way and should be read by all co-operators.

The book is published by Co-operatives Victoria. Free copies can be obtained from the SouthEast Office from early September 2014.

David also authored *The Phoenix* and *Co-operators—Co-operation and Co-operatives* both published by the SouthEast Housing Co-operative Ltd.

Co-operation – Ideal and Practical

Each for All and All for Each



David Griffiths

SOUTHEAST XMAS PARTY



**Robert Eadie Pavilion
Healesville Sanctuary
RSVP **NOW** 9706 8005**

**SOUTHEAST XMAS PARTY
7TH DECEMBER 2014**

Board Public Records

Public records of board meetings are available on the SouthEast web site at:

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/board/public-records>

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